


Soldiers

Online





THE GO B DAY

Photos by SSG John Valceanu

Three members of West Point's Class of 2000 — diplomas in hand — share congratulations after the ceremony.

Following a long-standing tradition, cadets cheer for the "goat," the graduating cadet with the lowest grade-point average.

AFTER four long years, the big day finally arrived for the Class of 2000 at the United States Military Academy. The young men and women officially stopped being cadets on May 27 and began their Army careers as commissioned officers during a graduation ceremony held at the academy's Michie Stadium. It was a day the cadets, and the thousands of friends and family members who attended, will probably never forget.





Class of 2000 cadets march onto the field at Michie Stadium at the beginning of the graduation ceremony. The spectacle marks the end of four years of intense study for the graduating cadets.



Members of the U.S. Military Academy band play a rousing tune as cadet underclassmen and guests watch the unfolding ceremony.

Cadets lining up for their trip to the podium look on as others receive their diplomas.





A noncommissioned officer assigned to the academy's staff congratulates a graduating cadet. NCOs play a vital role in educating future officers.



Family members and friends of graduating cadets watch as the ceremony unfolds.



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Seated cadets wait for the ceremony to begin. Their white hats will soon soar skyward in the traditional post-graduation hat toss.

Vice President Al Gore, a Vietnam veteran and former Army journalist, speaks to the graduating class.